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## MACKINAC ISLAND CONFERENCE

By unanimous vote the Council elected to its membership: George F. Bowerman, W. N. C. Carlton, Linda A. Eastman, Mary F. Isom, and Judson T. Jennings.

The question of membership in the Executive board, by which a person may serve both as an elected member and also as an *ex-officio* member, was referred for consideration of the Executive board.

The Special libraries association, which held its meetings at Mackinac Island, voted to request the A. L. A. to allow it to become affiliated with the American library association, and to establish the usual relations maintained by that Association with its affiliated organizations. Council referred the request to a special committee to be appointed by the President, to report at the January meeting of Council. The President appointed C. H. Gould, C. W. Andrews, and A. E. Bostwick as members of this Committee.

Following the consideration given by the Public documents committee to the questionnaire sent out by the Congressional printing investigation commission, important recommendations were made to Council by the Committee.

Council voted to adopt the following:

Whereas frequent injustice has been done both to the government, and in many instances to the several libraries designated as regular depositories, by requiring said libraries to receive all publications issued by the government whether able to care for them or not; and, Whereas various depositories of long standing and wide use and influence have, from time to time, been removed from the depository list by direction of Congress,

Resolved, That in the judgment of the American library association, depository libraries should be divided into two classes: First, permanent depositories, which shall include all state libraries and such other large or important libraries as may from time to time be designated. They shall receive all publications issued by the government, and shall from time to time be visited by an official, competent to give criticism or advice. Second, other libraries, which shall be allowed to select such publications as may be of service to their several communities. All documents so deposited shall be made accessible to the public.

A second resolution was submitted by

the Committee and was adopted as follows:

Whereas, under the present printing law, Congressional titling has been omitted, and wisely so, from departmental publications distributed by the Superintendent of documents to depository libraries,

Resolved, That we recommend such publications be withdrawn from the Congressional set, and whether mailed thereafter by the Superintendent of documents or by the several departments, the circulation of them be left to the discretion of the receiving library.

Resolved, We recommend that unless otherwise requested, one copy only of each publication be sent, and that the granting or refusal of duplication be a matter of discretion with the Superintendent or department.

Resolved, We recommend also that the serial number be restored to documents bearing the Congressional titling, and that all documents, whether Congressional or departmental, be mailed promptly upon issue.

Mr. Wellman presented the following resolution, which was adopted:

Whereas, The "Patent office gazette" is one of the most valuable public documents received by a large number of libraries, especially those situated in manufacturing districts,

Resolved, That we deprecate any action depriving these libraries of the receipt of the "Patent office gazette" free of charge.

Council voted also that

"We approve of the suggestion of President Heinemann of the League of American municipalities to centralize the distribution of official publications of all departments of American cities,"

and the Secretary was instructed to forward a copy of this resolution to the League of American municipalities.

Following a general discussion, Council voted to approve the preparation of a statement of American library conditions existing at the present time, and to print this in handsome form in English, German, and French, to be published by the Publishing board of the A. L. A., and distributed to foreign libraries and elsewhere at the discretion of the Publishing board.

The PRESIDENT: If there is no objection, this report will take the usual course, and be accepted.

Our first paper on the program this afternoon is on the Deterioration of paper used in newspapers by MR. FRANK P. HILL, of the Brooklyn public library, whom I have the pleasure of presenting.

#### THE DETERIORATION OF NEWS-PAPER PAPER\*

At the conference of librarians held at Bretton Woods in 1909, Mr. Chivers presented the subject of "The paper of lending library books"† in such a thorough and valuable manner that it aroused discussion and interest, not only among those in attendance, but of the library profession generally, both here and abroad. He dealt chiefly with the quality of the paper used in the popular fiction of the day and books for children, which represent the classes of books most largely used in our libraries and most frequently needing rebinding and replacing.

The substitution of cheap wood-pulp paper for that made from rags, in the stock used for our daily newspapers, presents another problem, and it is of that which I wish to speak to-day, for if book paper is bad, that used for newspapers is worse.

My attention was recently called to the necessity for rebinding some of the Brooklyn and Manhattan papers in our library. Upon examination it was found that in many instances papers published within the last forty years had begun to discolor and crumble to such an extent that it would hardly pay to bind those which had

been folded for any length of time. Further investigation showed that practically all of these newspapers were printed on cheap wood-pulp paper, which carries with it the seeds of early decay, and that the life of a periodical printed on this inferior stock is not likely to be more than fifty years.

This is a serious matter, and demands the attention of publishers and librarians throughout the country. It means that the material for history contained in the newspapers will not be available after the period mentioned, and that all such historical record will eventually disappear unless provision is made for reprinting or preserving the volumes as they exist at present. The historian depends to such an extent upon newspapers for his data, that it will mean a serious loss if some preservative process cannot be found. We can very well bear the loss of many books printed upon wood-pulp paper, but the loss of newspapers containing the events of the day would be one which would be felt for all time. It would seem possible that some means might be provided whereby, for filing purposes, a better paper would be used for newspapers. The matter is presented at this time for the purpose of calling the attention of the publishers and librarians to the necessity for a better quality of paper for such files of newspapers as are to be preserved.

As soon as the condition of the files of the Brooklyn public library was discovered, a circular was sent to some of the prominent newspaper publishers asking (1), the result of their experience; and (2), whether a better grade of paper was being used for running off extra copies for their own files; and (3), what, if any, means were being taken to preserve the files in their own offices. It was hoped as a result of the circular that definite measures of improvement would be suggested. From responses received it is evident that there is a desire on the part of the publishers to meet the requirements of librarians and others on this subject; and it is likely that a conference of publishers and librarians will be held in the near future to con-

\* Prof. Justin Winsor, foreseeing that in course of time the issues printed on the ordinary newspaper of to-day must end in dust, 20 or 30 years ago tried to induce the publishers of the leading daily newspapers of Boston to have a few copies of each issue printed on paper of extra good and durable quality, for the files of the Boston public library, with which he was connected. But his efforts were in vain, because, as the proprietors of the journals put it, it was "too much fuss." ("Library Journal," 16:242.)

† See "Bulletin of the American library association," September, 1909, 5:231-259.

sider the feasibility of printing some copies on better paper; but the answers showed that no special paper was used, and that no means were taken to preserve (by reprinting or by chemical process) those in the worst condition.

Inquiries were also sent to various manufacturers of paper with no better result. No encouragement was received from this source except that one manufacturer thought that some newspaper publishers were using a better grade; and another, that he had just the paper which ought to be used. It was stated that two New York publishers used a better grade of paper for a few additional copies, but returns from these papers indicate that no difference is made at the present time. We have not found any newspaper that runs off extra copies on a better grade.

There appear, in fact, to be two very strong objections to striking off special copies for filing purposes. The first is that the better grades of paper are not made to fit the large rolls used in printing presses; the second, that the limited number of subscribers who would purchase such an edition would not compensate the publishers for the increased cost of the paper and the expense of changing rolls.

Inasmuch, therefore, as it is hardly probable that publishers will agree to strike off a special edition of their publication on a paper better suited to binding, two other methods are possible for preserving the valuable material stored in newspapers already printed on the cheap grade paper: (1), by reprinting; (2), by the use of some chemical process as a preservative.

The first is eliminated because of its expense; this would be greater than that of striking off extra copies on better paper in the beginning.

It is undoubtedly true that the quality of paper, in common with the quality of other articles of commerce, has suffered because the demand for a high class material is so small.

In the late sixties, when wood pulp was first used in this country, and the early seventies, the grade was higher than that

of paper made between 1876 and 1886, improving in the nineties, and being still better since 1900. If only the better grades now manufactured were used, there would be less cause for complaint. The enormous quantity of paper required is another reason for the cheap quality used. A newspaper with a circulation of about one-half million copies per day consumes 185 tons of paper every week, and practically all of the half-million copies serve their purpose and may be destroyed almost as soon as they are issued. For this reason, publishers have heretofore been chiefly interested in getting the cheapest possible paper for their purpose. As a general thing, the 3-cent newspapers use a better grade than do those papers selling for 1 or even 2 cents; but all the 3-cent newspapers do not use the best paper, as the files of the Brooklyn public library show. One of this price, printed in 1905, shows marked indications of deterioration.

The publishers of some of our daily journals have shown a marked interest in the subject. The "Brooklyn Eagle," for example, as soon as the matter was called to its attention, instituted an investigation, and has printed several articles on the subject. A reporter of the paper called at the office of Albrecht Pagenstecher, 41 Park Row, New York, the man who first introduced the wood-pulp paper process into this country. Mr. Pagenstecher, Sr., was out of town, but his son, who is thoroughly conversant with the paper business, consented to discuss the situation as follows:

"Until the end of the sixties, all paper manufactured in the United States was made entirely of rags, the cheapest grades selling for something like 15 cents per pound. . . . The notion that paper could be made from wood pulp was formed in Germany. The story goes that the inventor of the process was walking through the woods one day when his attention was called to a large wasp's nest hanging from a tree. He wondered idly where the wasps could have secured the paper to make their nests, examined the material more closely, and came to the conclusion that it was nothing more than chewed wood. He experimented until he found that wood, after being ground to a pulp,

could be rolled out into paper. About 1850 several paper mills on a small scale were established in Germany.

"Hearing of this process, Albrecht Pagenstecher of Osnabrick, who was at that time an exporter, decided shortly after the Civil war to buy a couple of the stone grinders and send them to the United States. He shipped them to Curtissville, Mass., sent along a mechanic to set them up and operate them, and then asked the American manufacturers to have a look at the new process. But they took no stock in it, and it required some time before any of them bought grinders. Pagenstecher meanwhile established mills of his own, bought power on the Hudson River, and, as a result of his faith and enterprise, the use of wood to make paper became general about 1870. Paper dropped quickly from its former price of 15 cents to 10 cents and even 5 cents a pound.

"But even up to 1890 this ground wood paper still contained 25 per cent of rags, it being necessary to put in this amount to make the paper strong enough to pass over the paper-making machine and subsequently through the newspaper process. Then, early in the nineties, the sulphide process was introduced, in which a mixture of chemicals in liquid form takes the place of rags. The mechanical pulp, produced by grinding the wood under hydraulic pressure, and the chemical pulp, produced by cooking the wood in a mixture of sulphur, water, and lime, are mixed together in different proportions, depending on the quality of the paper that is to be produced."

This further reduced the cost of paper, but, in the opinion of Mr. Pagenstecher, still further reduced the paper's power of resistance to wear and tear.

"I do not believe," said he, "that the sulphide-process paper is as strong as the 25-per-cent-rags paper.

"This difficulty with newspaper files has been called to our attention several times, and I confess that we are unable to suggest a remedy. So far as I know, there is no preservative on the market that would give newspapers a better wearing quality. The only thing to do, in my opinion, is to print the number of papers required for filing purposes on a better grade of paper. The expense of an extra roll of good paper would not be great, and the papers could be run off after the press had turned out the regular issue."

Mr. Pagenstecher offered to write to Prof. Herzberg, of the University of Berlin, who is at the head of the government

testing office, where all the paper sold to the government undergoes a special test to determine its quality. In the early part of June a reply was received from Prof. Herzberg to the effect that experiments recently initiated by the German governmental paper-testing-institute of Berlin, had resulted in producing a liquid mixture by the use of which wood-pulp paper may be indefinitely preserved. The method as described by Prof. Herzberg is as follows:

"We have recently given much thought to the matter of preserving crumbling and decaying papers, and have secured some excellent results. There is a way of making old and brittle newspaper usable. They can be put back into condition so that they may be read and preserved for centuries to come. Our method is to dip the sheets, one by one, into a cellit solution, and then hang them up to dry. If their condition makes it impossible to hang them up, they may be dried by being spread on large meshed nets. This treatment binds the sheets, does not damage the paper body, and makes it possible to preserve newspapers for a long time.

"The solution used in the experiment was prepared in the Institute. It can be purchased from the Technical department of the Friedrich Bayer & Co., color factories of Elberfeld, Germany. I should suggest the importation of several quarts of this mixture for experimental purposes.

"The success of this treatment is very surprising. Sheets which before were rotting, and about to fall to pieces, can be handled readily, and acquire a parchment-like firmness. If, after an interval of several decades, it should be found necessary to repeat immersion in the solution, this will not damage the paper, and it would seem that in this way published matter might be preserved for centuries."

The news of this discovery will be joyfully welcomed by librarians and historical institutions everywhere, and thorough tests should be made of the process. It may be found perfectly feasible to apply the preparation to papers issued from now on; but there will still remain the problem of the volumes already bound, since it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to treat these volumes, page by page, with the solution, because the size of the sheets and the weakened condition of the paper would make it practically impossible to handle them.

If publishers can be made to see that it is to their interest as well as ours to have their publications preserved, they may be willing to print a few copies of each issue on paper which has been treated with this chemical in the roll. They may also be willing to co-operate with us in finding the best way of dealing with the bound pages. The only practical suggestion I have to offer at this time is that a committee be appointed from this Association to confer with the publishers on the subject of the deterioration of newspaper paper, with the hope of finding a practical remedy for existing conditions.

**THE PRESIDENT:** You have heard this important paper and the recommendation. Is there any discussion? It would be in order to refer to the Executive board this recommendation that a committee be appointed. Do I hear that motion?

**Mr. MONTGOMERY:** I will make that motion, Mr. President.

Seconded and adopted.

**THE PRESIDENT:** We will now hear the report of the Executive board.

#### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

At the first of two meetings held by the Executive board of the American Library Association at Mackinac Island, there was considerable discussion of the recommendation made by the Committee on Library Training for the appropriation of \$500 to defray expenses incident to a proposed examination of all library schools which wished such investigation, and the Executive board voted that money is not available at this time for the purposes suggested.

The Board voted that the list of library schools be omitted in the "Hand-book" of the A. L. A., and the Secretary was instructed in answering any inquiries in regard to library schools to disclaim any endorsement of the same by the American Library Association.

#### Changes in the By-Laws

The Board voted that the President and Secretary prepare a draft of the changes

in the By-laws of the Association, necessary to carry out the recommendations of the Council made in January, 1910, in regard to the establishment or discontinuance of sections of the A. L. A.

The President and Secretary drafted the following proposed changes, which were adopted by the Board:

Petitions for the establishment of sections shall be presented only by members actively engaged in the work of the proposed section and by not less than 20 such members. Before such a petition be granted by Council, it shall be referred to a special committee to be appointed by the President, which committee after investigating the grounds for the petition and the conditions regarding it, shall report to the Council as to the desirability of such a section. Council shall have power to discontinue a section when in the opinion of Council, the usefulness of that section has ceased.

The New England Education League had requested the A. L. A. to take over the work it had been doing in urging Congress to provide for a library post. The Executive board referred the matter to the A. L. A. Committee on federal relations, with power.

#### Committees

The following committees were appointed for the ensuing year:

*Publishing board:* Mrs. Elmendorf was reappointed a member of the Publishing board for a term of three years.

*Finance committee:* C. W. Andrews, F. F. Dawley and E. H. Anderson.

*Public documents committee:* G. S. Godard, Johnson Brigham, Ernest Bruncken, L. J. Burpee, T. W. Koch, C. S. Reeder, T. M. Owen, S. H. Ranck, J. D. Thompson.

*Co-operation with the N. E. A.:* Mary E. Ahern, Genevieve M. Walton, Irene Warren, Ida M. Mendenhall, and George H. Locke.

*Library administration:* The Executive board approved the Committee's list of questions to be submitted to members during the year, and Voted, To continue the present Committee, namely, Harrison W. Craver, H. M. Lydenberg and Ethel F. McCollough.